

2002 Annual Report Executive Summary

Rio Grande Valley Empowerment Zone

The Rio Grande Valley Empowerment Zone Corporation (RGVEZC) is in its ninth year of operation. This year was one of great success as the RGVEZC was able to bring to fruition its investment in basic infrastructure in our communities. We, together with the USDA Rural Development State Office, specifically Mr. Bryan Daniels and Mr. Steve Kelly, have created an opportunity for economic vitality and opportunity in our empowerment zone communities. A total of twenty environmental reports were approved by the state office and as many projects were commenced. There is an immense sense of satisfaction that the RGVEZC Board and staff feel when we know that there is a measurable impact in the quality of life of our residents. This work is not done in isolation but in partnership with our communities. The level of community involvement and participation is at its greatest since the inception of the RGVEZC. We attribute this to the fact that these communities are seeing and enjoying the fruits of their labor. We have new parks in our communities, new volunteer fire departments, comprehensive community master planning that continue to foster community involvement. Several of our communities have created new non-profits that work on quality of life issues along side municipal, county, and state entities. Our task now is to complete the forty ongoing projects while developing the last eight projects in response to the latest strategic planning efforts in our communities. That can only be accomplished with the strong community support and committed staff that the RGVEZC enjoys.